

# So, what's next?

A guide to careers in Nursing



Faculty of Health

health

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**KEEPING MORE PEOPLE HEALTHIER, LONGER.**

## A message from the Dean of Health and the Director of the School of Nursing

At York's Faculty of Health, our vision is to educate future global leaders who will help redefine and advance health and human science. Each day, our graduates do exactly that.

York's interdisciplinary approach integrates a wide variety of perspectives and valuable learning opportunities that give our students a breadth and depth of understanding of health and health care issues. That educational background, which combines theory and real life experience, allows them to step into a wide variety of careers upon graduation. Today, York Faculty of Health graduates can be found working as clinicians, practitioners and care givers; educators; planners and administrators; researchers; consultants and advisors; and in many more roles.

What career awaits you upon graduation? That will depend on your interests, knowledge and abilities. You will almost certainly have a wide range of options given that the demand for caring, qualified health professionals is continually increasing due to a variety of factors including stressful working environments, an aging and growing population and workforce, new technologies, restructured health care systems and new views on fitness, disability and lifestyle.

As one of our graduates advises, "The opportunities are tremendous and I'd strongly recommend that people look beyond the traditional career paths... There are so many different, exciting choices available." I encourage you to read about the exciting careers York Faculty of Health alumni are pursuing as they make a difference in health and human science.



**Harvey Skinner, PhD, CPsych, FCAHS**  
Dean  
Faculty of Health



**Claire Mallette, PhD**  
Director & Associate Professor  
School of Nursing



## **As a student, you make a lot of choices. Where to study? What to study? Who to study with?**

Now that you're ready to graduate, it's time to make another important choice: Deciding what's next for you. Where will you begin your career and, if so, in what job?

Whatever choice you make, your studies at York's Faculty of Health have provided you with a great start towards a financially secure and interesting career in health. Since our goal is to keep more people healthier longer, we take a broad view of health. That wide perspective creates an extensive range of career opportunities requiring a variety of skills and backgrounds.

You are in an exciting field at an exciting time. The demand for caring, qualified professionals with an education in Nursing is increasing due to an aging and growing population and workforce, new technologies, a focus on primary care and restructured health care systems.

### **When deciding on your next steps, and particularly when choosing to focus your career, it helps to ask yourself:**

- What are my biggest interests—the areas of nursing I really enjoy?
- What are my special talents and skills?
- What types of situations or environments appeal to me?
- What types of patients and populations do I enjoy working with?
- What areas of nursing can help build my skills and establish a foundation to advance my practice?
- What is going to matter to me next year? In five years? In fifteen?

Your priority may be to find an area to hone your practice, or to begin to build a more specialized nursing career. Or, you may want to “make a difference” where you can play a leading role in promoting health in individuals, families and communities, . Regardless of your choice, York's School of Nursing and the Faculty of Health want you to succeed. On the following pages, we offer you a variety of sources of information to help you as you transition from student life.

## **Where would I work?**

People with Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees can be found working almost anywhere. They work in community and rural settings, hospitals, clinics, public health, education, health program development, and in academic, medical, industrial, science and research institutions.

## **How can I gain work experience while at the Faculty of Health?**

Graduates unanimously agree—working in your field as a volunteer, with not-for-profit or student organizations, and with campus organizations is invaluable. It's the best way to gain leadership skills and experience that will catch the attention of future employers.

Your practicum experiences throughout your time at York will demonstrate marketable skills. These experiences in such areas as in the hospital setting caring for adults, mothers and infants and/or children, geriatrics, mental health, communities, public health and even possibly international or northern nursing placements, have given you the opportunities and ability to launch your nursing career in whatever direction you choose.

In addition, eligible students interested in research careers or postgraduate study may apply to work at York's Research@York program (RAY) and be paid to participate in research projects with faculty members and/or fellow students, while receiving compensation at a competitive rate.

## **Interested in creating new knowledge?**

After completing additional post-graduate studies, nurses can choose to focus on research and creating new knowledge in nursing science. A career in research may involve working as a practising nurse, or in an academic environment. Some may be involved investigating key health care issues or clinical trials as part of a research team.

We've invited a few graduates to tell us about their career choices and offer you further questions to ask yourself.

## Compassionate, kindhearted and devoted to delivering patient-centred care?

**Helen Olabode**

**2011 BScN (Second-entry)**

Postpartum Registered Nurse

Recipient of Joan C. Ballantyne

Compassionate Nursing Award

Upon completing her degree in Nursing, Helen Olabode had honed not just her interpersonal skills, but also her business, critical thinking, research and communication skills amongst a plethora of others. "I came out prepared for my career as a nurse as I was given the skills necessary for developing patient and family-centred care. Moreover, I was able to refine my communication skills that have now permitted me to enhance my voice in the community".

She benefited particularly from the multifaceted exposure that her program gave to social workers, physicians, dieticians and psychologists who belonged to a larger group of experts and professionals. This broadened her current scope of healthcare by exposing her to multiple angles from which patient care should be approached.

Helen's dedication and commitment to her patients awarded her the Joan C. Ballantyne Compassionate Nursing Prize which is given to an individual who is able to demonstrate talent in the field of nursing by demonstrating kindness and compassion toward all patients under his/her care

Helen is currently working in Women's and Children's Healthcare Services at William Osler's Etobicoke General Hospital. "I am a Postpartum Registered Nurse. Additionally, I provide patient care in a family-centred setting and work collaboratively within a multi-disciplinary team. I continuously provide care and support for, medium and high-risk patients".

Volunteering has always been an integral part of Helen's studies. While an undergraduate student, Helen joined the Student Health Ambassadors at York (SHAY) Program which facilitated the development of her personal and professional leadership skills. At the moment, Helen volunteers for McMaster University interviewing prospective students looking to gain entry into School of Rehabilitation MSc Physiotherapy Program.

## Have a flair for managing and organizing?

**Joanne Gallevo**

**2001 BScN Collobarative Program (Seneca College and York University)**

Clinical Nursing Manager

A passion for helping others is what defines most individuals in the Nursing Program. While a hospital setting is a prime destination for many graduates, Joanne decided to use her degree to get involved in the construction of Philip Aziz's Centre's Emily House as a Clinical Nursing Manager.

"Emily's House is Toronto's first children's hospice. It is currently under construction and will be completed in February 2013. Emily's House will provide hospice services for children from 0-18 years old who have a life-threatening illness. Its services include respite, and end-of-life care. Currently, I am developing Emily's House policies and procedures, recruiting nursing staff and will soon orient nursing staff to Emily's House, so we can begin to operate.

The underlying philosophy of York's nursing program – which promotes the active involvement of the patient in the care giving process – is what inspired Joanne, now a Registered Nurse, and her outlook on patient care. "While at York University's school of Nursing, the person centric model of Nursing that I was introduced to has helped me become not only a confident, competent Clinical practitioner, but also a caring advocate for the patients and families that I serve".

Prior to attending York, Joanne completed her Masters of Science in Nursing from the University of British Columbia. She is also a Certified Hospice Palliative Care Nurse with the Canadian Nurses Association, and an Executive Member of the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario Palliative Nursing Interest Group.



## How do I begin my career path in nursing?

Nurses have the option of working in a range of different practice areas- and since nursing knowledge and skills are highly marketable and transferrable you may choose to work in several areas over the course of your career. Some careers in practice include:

- **Home health care** - nurses provide a variety of care to people in their own homes. Good communication skills, an ability to teach family members and the ability to work independently are important for careers in home health care. Most home care nurses work for home care agencies, but some are self-employed.
- **Primary health care** - following post graduate studies, nurses as primary health nurse practitioners, have responsibilities in caring for patients as part of a health care team in neighbourhood health centres, nursing homes, and/or other locations. They provide services such as health promotion, disease and injury prevention, acute and chronic disease management, rehabilitation and support
- **Public health** - nurses with an interest in health promotion, health education and illness prevention in populations often choose careers in public health.
- **Hospital tertiary care** - these nurses are integral members of health care teams who work in acute care settings.
- **Long-term care** - with today's aging population, demand is growing for nurses in leadership roles in seniors homes, nursing homes, rehabilitation hospitals, respite care facilities and palliative care hospices.
- **Global Health care** - with globalization, nurses are becoming leaders in creating changes globally in such areas as health and well being, health systems, nonprofit /profit sectors, research and education.



## **What kind of salary can I expect?**

Your salary will depend on your job, your years of experience, where you work, and your employer. With so many variables, this is a challenging question to answer precisely, yet an important one to ask. A good way to learn about salaries is to check with nursing associations such as the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario. If you are hoping to work in a unionized setting, you could review the most recent collective agreement. For example, many of the hospitals in Ontario are members of the Ontario Nursing Association.

## **Who can help me make my career decisions?**

Ultimately, it's up to you! Parents, friends and professors may provide advice. The media can be a source of information. Your job and clinical experiences will also shape your decisions. In the end, though, it comes down to you: it's your life, your work and your purpose.

It's your future, and it's a big choice. But you don't have to go it alone. York University students and recent alumni have access to the York University Career Centre, a team of career professionals who support you in the development of career self management skills. The Centre delivers job search, career development and experiential education programs to help you build success on your terms. And of course, at the School of Nursing, your professors are all Registered Nurses who are able to advise you as well.

Check out further information at [www.yorku.ca/careers](http://www.yorku.ca/careers)

### **Want to inspire others?**

While all nurses are teachers to some extent, you may be especially inspired by the opportunity to teach or continue your involvement with the academic world. After completion of additional post-graduate studies, you may choose to teach nursing at community colleges or universities; be a clinical educator within practice settings for individuals or families and/or be responsible for the professional development of other nurses; serve as a consultant to hospitals and home care agencies; or provide continuing education courses to other health care professionals.

### **Do you have a desire to be a leader and/or shape health care policy?**

Nurses are found among the senior leadership and executive teams in a variety of health care organizations including hospitals, long-term care facilities, community health centres, home care agencies, nursing colleges and professional associations where they play an active role shaping health care and patient care policies. Nurses may also be employed in various capacities within government, where they play a key role in developing health care policies..





## **Useful Websites**

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### **Canadian Nurses Association**

[www.cna-aiic.ca](http://www.cna-aiic.ca)

### **Canadian Wellness**

[www.canadianwellness.com](http://www.canadianwellness.com)

### **Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities**

[www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca)

### **Ontario Nurses Association**

[www.ona.org](http://www.ona.org)

### **The Ontario Physical and Health Education Association**

[www.ophea.org](http://www.ophea.org)

### **Ontario Public Service Careers**

[www.gojobs.gov.on.ca](http://www.gojobs.gov.on.ca)

### **Registered Nurses Association of Ontario**

[www.rnao.org](http://www.rnao.org)

## **York Student Clubs & Services**

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### **Canadian Nursing Student Association (CNSA)**

[www.cnsa.ca](http://www.cnsa.ca)

### **Nursing Student Association at York (NSAY)**

[nsay@yorku.ca](mailto:nsay@yorku.ca)

### **York University Career Centre**

[www.yorku.ca/careers](http://www.yorku.ca/careers)

Faculty of Health  
York University  
4700 Keele Street  
Toronto ON M3J 1P3  
416-736-5124

[www.yorku.ca/health](http://www.yorku.ca/health)

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